

# Resolution to support Arlene's Flowers headed back to Kennewick council

By Ty Beaver  
Tri-City Herald  
August 9, 2015

The Kennewick City Council is scheduled to discuss during its Aug. 11 workshop meeting a proposed resolution to support the embattled owner of a Richland flower shop who refused to serve a gay couple.

Council member John Trumbo introduced the resolution in early June. It has since been under review by the city's business and administration committee.

Trumbo took the wording for the resolution from one by Joseph Backholm, executive director of the Family Policy Institute of Washington, in support of Barronelle Stutzman, the owner of Arlene's Flowers. The Family Policy Institute is one of Stutzman's supporters, and Backholm has appealed to local government officials to support his resolution.

Councilman Bob Parks at the time urged the council to take action on the resolution. Councilman Greg Jones suggested it first be passed on to the budget and administrative committee, and the council agreed by consensus.

Pasco City Councilman Bob Hoffman proposed a similar resolution to his fellow city council members in early July. The rest of the Pasco council said at the time the issue wasn't a top concern for them or they would need time to decide whether to weigh in.

The proposed resolution handed out by Trumbo and Hoffman states that "America is the land of opportunity" and "we are stronger because we are different."

The resolution says the Kennewick and Pasco city councils should encourage a free market where the "government should not be forcing anyone to violate his or her religious beliefs in life and work."

A Benton County Superior Court judge ruled earlier this year that Stutzman broke the law when she told longtime customer Robert Ingersoll in March 2013 that she couldn't provide services for his wedding to partner Curt Freed because of her religious beliefs.

Stutzman is a Christian from the Southern Baptist tradition.

The couple and the state filed three separate lawsuits against Stutzman. Her attorneys recently filed appeal notices with the state Supreme Court to hear the case.

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